

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERVICE

Report Number

5
Jan-'46

INTERNATIONAL CITY MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION
1313 EAST 60TH STREET - CHICAGO 37, ILLINOIS

Route To:

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SOME SPECIAL POLICE PROBLEMS

Should policemen be required to furnish their own uniforms and equipment? Policemen generally are required to furnish, at their own expense, the uniform (consisting of cap, blouse, and trousers), overcoat, raincape, shoes, and rainproof cap cover. Almost as commonly must they furnish their own service revolvers and holsters and in many cities handcuffs as well. These items make up the complete uniform which every man of police rank is expected to possess and always have available for use, regardless of his duty assignment. Even officers on plain-clothes duty must be available for emergency service in uniform in case of mob violence, parades, and other instances where the uniform serves for the purpose of instant identification and, hence, may exert a control or repressive influence.

Where police officers are required to buy their uniforms and other equipment, the uniforms, especially those of men assigned to detective duty, often get into an unrepresentable state of disrepair. Some officers sell their uniforms to recruits or to other members of the force and as a result some men will appear in as ill-fitting, dirty, faded, and slovenly dress as the level of supervision will permit. Uniforms at such times cease to be uniform. A black tie gives no trouble but a white shirt is a source of difficulty; a blue or brown shirt is much less likely to show the need of laundering. Finally, the financially embarrassed recruit who must buy his outfit may seek or accept a loan from a politician to meet this first considerable expense item and therefore be subject to outside influence. Thus the municipality that requires its policemen to furnish their own uniforms, revolvers, and other equipment, puts a strain on supervision and may contribute to a lowered morale and loss of police prestige.

A city can exercise more effective control over police officers and their appearance if all of the initial equipment except underwear is supplied at public expense. Officers may then be required to make a presentable appearance at all times. How much equipment should be furnished police officers at public expense depends on such factors as the annual salary scale as compared with that of the police service in other cities, the salary in relation to similar services (such as private police) in the same city, the presence or absence of barrack or housing accommodations, and duty conditions or the type of assignment and its hazards. The replacement of uniforms and other items of clothing may be considered the responsibility of the policeman, since they are his "working clothes." To secure a lower price and control the quality of material the city should procure and issue replacements and collect from the officers. Uniforms that are damaged beyond repair in performance of duty should be replaced at city expense.

Men assigned to traffic duty on foot or motorcycle or any duty which requires a special uniform, in whole or part, should not be expected to undergo this additional expense. If the assignment is to be permanent and the special uniform is not suitable for emergency police duty on parade or suppression of mass disturbances the department should furnish the uniform or make an adjustment with the officer to offset this added and unusual expense.

Except in most unusual circumstances the police should not be required to furnish their own motorcycles, automobiles, rifles, shotguns, radio equipment, or any

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of the items not properly included in the list of customary personal articles. Any large police department will do well to provide all police equipment and, in so doing, set up the control measures which will insure a presentable personnel, higher morale, and budget economies. The replacement of such equipment should be a departmental expense.

When the city furnishes uniforms and other equipment certain controls should be set up. An average life of the various articles of clothing can be ascertained for ordinary police duty and a definite time period established for each clothing item. For unusual types of duty the necessary issue of clothing should be by requisition approved by a high administrative officer. Certain miscellaneous items of clothing and equipment may be issued on requisition approved by an appropriate supervisory officer of high rank. Provision should be made for certain articles to be withdrawn from and returned to a storeroom, according to need. This will permit the exercise of responsible custodianship, including the cleaning and repair of appropriate property. All articles of issue of course remain the property of the municipality. Damaged or returned clothing or other articles of issue often may be repaired and restored for re-issue and service use, with resultant economies. Misfits can be avoided, with consequent improvement in the appearance of the force. For ranks above that of sergeant a money allowance may be made in lieu of the clothing issue.

In the case of apprehended criminals for whom rewards are offered, should the reward go to the arresting officer or does it go to the city? Most police departments now prohibit members of the force from accepting rewards for the apprehension of criminals. Such moneys usually are turned over to the general fund of the city or to the police pension fund. The fact that a reward has been paid to a police officer has on numerous occasions in the past enabled counsel to convince jurors that alleged confessions were not made by the defendants but were signed by them under duress, referring to the prospects of receiving a reward in event of conviction as the incentive or motive actuating the police to "frame" the defendant. The police are or should be adequately compensated for their services and no extra emoluments should be extended for discharging the duties expected of them. Policemen are public servants and it is their duty, among other things, to detect and apprehend criminals, and unless it is specifically provided that they are entitled to accept special rewards for performance of the regular prescribed duties, such moneys should go to the city. Under the merit system the achievements of police officers are recorded and are considered when promotions are made. This should be sufficient incentive and reward for outstanding performance of duty.

What tests are best to use in recruitment? Cities which have personnel agencies that are members of the Civil Service Assembly (1313 East 60 Street, Chicago 37) may secure sample examinations on loan from the OSA. One of the best known standardized tests used in the recruitment of police is the O' Rourke Police Adaptability Test, which may be secured at 3 cents a copy from the International Association of Chiefs of Police, 918 F Street, N.W., Washington, D. C., together with instructions and scoring stencils. Experience has shown that if an I.Q. of over 110 is required this test is not sufficiently selective for further elimination. Other suggestions for test material as well as procedure to be followed in recruitment are contained in: (1) Donald C. Stone, Recruitment of Policemen. International Association of Chiefs of Police. 1938. 28pp. 50 cents. (2) J. P. Searles and J. M. Leonard, Experiments in the Mental Testing of Detroit Policemen. Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, 1050 Buhl Building, Detroit. 1936. 54pp.